

## **Warehouse Safety Checklist**

### **Forklifts Operations**

**Hazard:** Annually about 100 employees are killed and 95,000 are injured while operating forklifts. Forklift turnover incidents account for over half of the fatalities.

#### **Solutions:**

- Only trained operators should operate forklifts;
- Do not allow customers or anyone under 18 years old to operate a forklift;
- Inspect forklift before use; Remove unsafe or defective trucks from until the proper repair is made; a lockout/tag-out system is utilized if immediate repairs cannot be made;
- Follow safe procedures for picking up, lowering, stacking and transporting loads;
- Drive safely; never exceed 5 mph, slow in congested areas, or on slippery surfaces;
- Ensure that the operator wears a seatbelt;
- Never drive up to a person standing in front of a fixed object such as a rack, wall or stacked materials;
- Prohibit stunt driving and horseplay;
- Do not handle loads that are heavier than the weight capacity of the forklift;
- Maintain sufficiently safe clearances for aisles, at loading docks and all passageways;
- Ensure adequate ventilation either by opened doors/windows or using a ventilation system to provide enough fresh air to keep concentrations of noxious gases from engine exhaust below acceptable limits;
- Provide covers and/or guardrails to protect

### **Loading Docks**

**Hazard:** Injuries happen when forklifts run off the dock, products fall on employees or equipment strikes a person.

#### **Solutions:**

- Drive forklifts slowly on docks and dock plates;
- Secure dock plates and check to see if the plate can safely support the load;
- Keep clear of dock edges and never back up forklifts to the dock's edge;
- Docks are properly guarded if 48" above lower level;
- Provide visual warnings near dock edges;

## **Materials Storage**

**Hazard:** Improperly stored materials may fall and injure workers.

### **Solutions:**

- Stack loads evenly and straight;
- Place heavier loads on lower levels first and work way up the rack with lighter loads;
- Remove one object at a time from racks & shelves;
- Keep aisles and passageways clear and in good repair.

## **Manual Lifting/Handling**

**Hazard:** Back injuries may occur from improper lifting, repetitive motion, or overexertion.

### **Solutions:**

- If possible, use powered equipment instead of requiring a manual lift for heavy materials;
- Minimize the need for lifting by using good design and engineering techniques;
- Lift properly and get a coworker to help if a product is too heavy.
- Provide general ergonomics training and task-specific training;
- Reduce lifts from shoulder height and from floor height by repositioning the shelf or bin;
- Ensure overhead lighting is adequate for the task at hand;
- Use your legs and keep your back in a natural position while lifting;
- Test the load to be lifted to estimate its weight, size and bulk, and to determine the proper lifting method;
- Get help if the load exceeds the maximum weight a person can lift safely without assistance;
- Don't twist while carrying a load, but shift your feet and take small steps in the direction you want to turn;
- Keep floors clean and free of slip and trip hazards.

## **Hazard Communication Safety**

- All hazardous materials containers are properly labeled, indicating the chemical's identity, the manufacturer's name and address, and appropriate hazard warnings.
- An updated list of hazardous chemicals & substances is maintained in supervisor's office for immediate use, usually in a MSDS notebook.
- There is a written Hazardous Communication Program; it covers hazard determination, including Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs), labeling and training.
- There is a system to check that each incoming chemical is accompanied by a MSDS.
- All employees are trained in the requirements of the hazard communication standard, the chemical hazards to which they are exposed, how to read and understand a MSDS and chemical labels, and on what precautions to take to prevent exposure.
- All employees are trained and training is documented.

- Procedures have been established to maintain and evaluate the effectiveness of the current program.
- Employees use proper personal protective equipment when handling chemicals.
- All chemicals are stored according to the manufacturer's recommendations and local or national fire codes.

### **Emergency Preparedness**

- A written emergency plan that describes what is expected of employees is available in the event of an emergency;
- An alarm system to notify employees is in place;
- Provisions for emergency exit locations and evacuation procedures;
- Procedures for accounting for all employees and visitors;
- Location and use of fire extinguishers and other emergency equipment;
- Exits, fire extinguishers, guards, etc. are inspected frequently.

*\*This information was adapted from OSHA publications regarding Warehouse Safety. Additional information can be obtained at [www.OSHA.gov/publications](http://www.OSHA.gov/publications)*